HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 65 FILED ON: 1/6/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 455

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Peter J. Koutoujian

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to family justice centers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Peter J. Koutoujian	*10th Middlesex*

HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 65 FILED ON: 1/6/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 455

By Mr. Koutoujian of Waltham, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 455) of Peter J. Koutoujian relative to the creation of family justice centers to assist victims of abuse in certain court jurisdictions. The Judiciary.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE
HOUSE
, NO. *1497* OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to family justice centers.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of Chapter 209A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 edition, shall be deleted and replaced with the following section:-

Section 2. Proceedings under this chapter shall be filed, heard and determined in the superior court department or respective divisions of the probate and family or district court departments having venue over the plaintiff's residence.? If the plaintiff has left a residence or household to avoid abuse, such plaintiff shall have the option of commencing an action in the court having venue over such prior residence or household, or in the court having venue over the present residence or household.? In the event that the plaintiff's residence also falls within a county that?provides the services of a Family Justice Center, that plaintiff shall also have the option to commence an action in the court located nearest the Family Justice Center.?

For purposes of this section, a Family Justice Center is defined in the commonwealth as such:?

A Family Justice Center is solely dedicated to service delivery?for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. A Family Justice Center locates in one facility providers and responders to enable easier access to services for victims of these crimes, and their children. The co-location of service providers, community-based programs, and criminal justice professionals is designed to create options, not barriers, for victims.